

Idling Vehicles on School Property

It has been documented that idling vehicles contribute to a wide range of health and environmental problems including triggering asthma attacks, carbon monoxide poisoning, eye and respiratory irritation, contributing to ozone generation, and air pollution.

Researchers have also proven that not only is it not necessary for vehicles to idle, but periods of long idling cause more wear to the engine and waste fuel. Schools and corporations that have adopted idling programs have realized savings in fuel and vehicle maintenance costs.

The Indiana IAQ Rule 410 IAC 33-4-3 requires schools to adopt and enforce a policy limiting vehicle idling on school campuses.

Consideration should be given to locations of building air intakes when evaluating “No Idling Zones” so as to minimize exhaust fumes being drawn into the building. Schools and school corporations may utilize the template sign available at the end of this section provided courtesy of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Protect Children at Child Care program (<https://www.in.gov/idem/health/2342.htm>).

Below is an example policy that schools may modify and adopt. In addition there are several policies available on the internet, such as one available at the IDEM’s Protect Children at Child Care website ([IDEM: Community Environmental Health: Protect Children at Child Care \(in.gov\)](https://www.in.gov/idem/health/2342.htm)) or at EPA’s Idle-Free Schools Toolkit for a Healthy School Environment ([Idle-Free Schools Toolkit for a Healthy School Environment | Healthy School Environments | US EPA](#)).

Example Policy:

School Corporations are free to use and modify this policy to meet their needs.

******* School Corporation Policy to Limit Vehicle Idling *******

A: Purpose – This policy is to limit vehicle emissions that might be brought into school buildings as mandated by 410 IAC 33-4-3. This will improve the health of students and staff through reduced exposure to these emissions.

B: Applicability – This policy applies to all public and private vehicles on the school campus.

C: Idling

1. Posting

- a) The school shall post signs in areas where idling is prohibited

2. Requirements

- a) Drivers of vehicles are to turn off the engine if the vehicle is to be stopped more than 5 minutes. (Engine cool down periods recommended by vehicle manufacturer may be followed)

- b) The employer of the bus driver shall inform the bus driver of these requirements.
- c) Teachers and school staff shall be informed of this policy at the start of each school year.
- d) During student / parent orientations, parents, and all students shall be informed of this policy.
- e) Any complaints of non-compliance are to be filed with the Superintendent's office.
- f) Any complaints of non-compliance will be reviewed, and action taken as necessary.

D: Exemptions

1. Safety of Children or Emergencies

- a) Use of lift equipment during loading or unloading of individuals with special needs.
- b) Use of heater or air conditioning during loading or unloading of individuals with special needs.
- c) Use of defrosters, heaters, air conditioners, or any other equipment for health or safety concerns.
- d) Use of bus headlights or flasher warning lights for safety or visibility purposes.
- e) For other safety or emergency issues.

2. Hot or Cold Weather

- a) If bus drivers are at a location more than 15 minutes, a waiting area should be provided for their use after turning off the bus engine.
- b) From (beginning date) to (ending date) if necessary and the bus has air conditioning, the bus may idle for a minimal period to cool the bus prior to loading, or while students remain on the bus.
- c) If necessary due to cold temperatures, a vehicle may idle for a minimal time to warm the vehicle.

3. Maintenance Operations

- a) (When possible, maintenance operations should not be conducted within 100 feet of a school building housing classrooms.) Buses may idle as necessary as part of a pre-trip safety inspection.
- b) If necessary to make emergency repairs to vehicles. (for example, jump starting another vehicle)

